

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 18-21, 23, 24 and 26-30 are presently pending in this application. Claims 17, 22 and 25 have been cancelled without prejudice, and the applicant expressly reserves the right to traverse the rejection of these claims in a different application. Claims 21, 24 and 29 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims. Claims 18-20 have been amended to depend from claim 21, claim 23 has been amended to depend from claim 24, and claims 26-28 have been amended to depend from claim 29. Because claims 21, 24 and 29 presented allowable subject matter before being amended in this paper, the rewriting of these claims in independent form is not a narrowing amendment made for the purpose of patentability.

The status of the claims in light of the Office Action dated May 19, 2003 is as follows:

(A) Claims 17, 19, 22, 25 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,950,327 issued to Peterson et al. ("Peterson");

(B) Claims 17, 22 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,213,853 issued to Gonzalez-Martin et al. ("Gonzalez-Martin");

(C) Claims 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 and 29 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims and any intervening claims, and claim 30 was allowed.

A. Response to Section 103 Rejection - Peterson

The rejection of claims 17, 19, 22, 25 and 27 over Peterson under Section 103 should be withdrawn. Claims 17, 22 and 25 have been cancelled, and thus this rejection is now moot with respect these claims. Additionally, claims 19 and 27 have been amended to depend from claims 21 and 29, respectively, which were indicated as being allowable and have been rewritten in independent form. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection based on Peterson should be withdrawn.

B. Response to Section 103 Rejection - Gonzalez-Martin

The rejection of claims 17, 22 and 25 over Gonzalez-Martin under Section 103 is now moot because these claims have been cancelled from the present application.


C. Allowed and Allowable Subject Matter

The objection to claims 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 and 29 should be withdrawn because claims 21, 24 and 29 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims. The remaining claims subject to this objection have been amended to depend from one of claims 21, 24 or 29. Therefore, this objection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims in the application comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the prior art. Please reconsider the application and provide a Notice of Allowance regarding the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call Paul Parker at (206) 359-3258.

Respectfully submitted,
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